



# Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary

NGO with special consultative status in the **Economic and Social Council** of the United Nations since **2013** and with the **Department of Public Information** since **2006**.



### In Memoriam....

It was with great sadness that we received the news of the death of **Sr. Brigid Driscoll RSHM** on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018. After some years of teaching and administration at Marymount she served as **President of Marymount College Tarrytown** for 20 years where she significantly advanced the cause of women's education. After her retirement Brigid continued to be actively involved on RSHM educational boards and in civic and religious advisory roles. In 2011 Brigid was appointed to a two-year term as the second **RSHM NGO Representative**. During this time she became actively engaged in many **NGO Committees**, and developed lasting relationships at the UN and with JPIC animators around the world. At a personal level, I am deeply grateful for her attentive and gracious mentorship in the role of RSHM NGO Representative.

*Veronica Brand RSHM*

## International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

On the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres gave a powerful message, opening the commemoration at the UN HQ. He noted that *"Ending poverty is not a matter of charity but a question of justice. There is a fundamental connection between eradicating extreme poverty and upholding the equal rights of all people."* The commemoration included messages from people living in poverty, ambassadors, activists and artists with the aim to build an inclusive world of universal respect for human rights and dignity. Nearly 1 billion people have escaped extreme poverty since the first International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 25 years ago, but too many others have been left behind. The commemoration served as an important reminder to step up efforts for the 783 million people still living in poverty.



➔ [Read more about the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#)

## Violence Against Women in Politics



During the month of October RSHM NGO attended a side event on **"Ending Violence Against Women in Politics"** convened by the **UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women**.

Violence against women in politics is a worldwide phenomenon. Today women make up 5.9% of heads of state and 23.6% of Members of Parliament. Of these women in parliament, a recent study by the IPU revealed that 81.8% experienced psychological violence, 44.4% received threats of death, rape, beating or kidnapping, 25.5% experienced violence in the parliament.

Furthermore 38.7% felt that violence against women in politics threatened their mandate implementation and freedom of expression.

We know that having women in politics tends to make government less corrupt and more focused on issues pertaining to human rights. However, due to the disproportionate violence women in politics face compared to men, the few women that do make it are less likely to do their job to the best of their ability because they fear violence as a response.

The event hosted testimonies from women Members of Parliament, representatives from Permanent Missions and grassroots women politicians on their experiences of violence against women in the political sphere and the message was clear. Violence against women in politics poses a threat to democracy and human rights. States must bear responsibility for addressing this in order to create equitable governments. ➔ [Read more....](#)



**RSHM NGO** would like to congratulate the **2018 Nobel Peace Prize** awardees and human rights champions, **Dr. Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad!** Dr. Denis Mukwege is from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nadia Murad is a Yazidi woman from Iraq and a survivor of sexual slavery and captivity by ISIS. They have both done tremendous work to highlight and eliminate the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war. Their fearless contributions to the human rights of women and girls has been a true inspiration!

➔ [Read more....](#)

### IPU STUDY ON VAW IN PARLIAMENT:

- 81.8%** Experienced psychological violence
- 44.4%** Received threats of death, rape, beatings or kidnapping
- 25.5%** Experienced physical violence in the parliament
- 21.2%** Of parliaments surveyed have a sexual harassment policy
- 38.7%** Women MPs said VAWP undermined both their mandate implementation and freedom of expression
- 46.7%** Feared for their security and that of their family

## Day of the Girl/Girl Advocates

**Girls spoke out and the world listened!** October 11th is the **International Day of the Girl** and is always wonderful day of celebration at the United Nations. This year hosted a set of girl activists who are demolishing stereotypes and inspiring a new generation of leaders to follow their dreams. Meet some of the girl activists celebrated at this year's "Speak Out".



**Selina** is the Founder and Director of Girls First Junior Program with the mission to provide equal access to STEM education for middle school girls, "Over all women only count for 28% of the worlds researchers, female students represent only 35% of all students enrolled in STEM related fields of study in higher education. Only 3% of information and communication technology graduates worldwide are women. Clearly, we need to change this."



**Shreeya** is a HerStory youth activist with the mission to raise awareness about challenges girls face in her community in Nepal such as the dowry system, "There are rural areas where girls are treated like animals but now it is our responsibility to make the people aware that a girl is not an animal, girls are not garbage. Girls are strong and beautiful, like me."



**Nadia** is the Co-Founder of Zero Hour with the mission to mobilize youth for climate action, "Climate change is an issue that impacts girls and the worst part is that it's already here, you can see the effects all around you...when the land is in danger the girls are in danger"

➔ [Watch the Girl Speak out Event](#)

## "Borders are not Barriers"



More than 50 representatives from eight networks of religious women and men combatting human trafficking in 16 countries of North, South and Central America met in Cleveland, Ohio from October 24 – 27 for the "Borders are not Barriers" Conference. The Hemispheric conference was hosted by the US Catholic Sisters against Human Trafficking. (USCSAHT). All the networks belong to the umbrella of the international network "Talitha Kum". We were honored that **Veronica RSHM** was asked to work with the Planning Team and serve as facilitator.

The Conference was designed to build a strong foundation for future transnational work together, creating solidarity, strengthening communications and raising awareness of the systemic and victim-centered anti-trafficking work of religious in the Western Hemisphere. Each network shared the reality of human trafficking in their context and the initiatives they were taking, working with others to combat it. Two survivors of Human trafficking participated and shared their stories as well as their activism. The importance of survivor-informed strategies was highlighted and joint actions were identified for future implementation.



➔ [Read more about it...](#)

## Global Interfaith Prayer



On October 30th, the global community of faith gathered at the Tillman Chapel at the Church Center for the United Nations. A bell rang thirteen times as to honor the victims of the mass shootings in the United States at the **Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh**, as well as the hate crime that resulted in the deaths of two African-Americans in Kentucky. In light of these tragic events, people of different faiths and backgrounds joined hands and sang together in a symbolic gesture of defiance to discrimination. Faith leaders shared inspiring words and offered prayers and reflections with the hopes of a more equitable future.

## Palermo Protocol

In mid-October the 9th session of the Conference of the Parties to the **Convention against Transnational Organized Crime** (#UNTOC) took place in Vienna. All but 4 member states of the UN have ratified the Convention, and all but 20 are now parties to the Protocol relating to Trafficking in Persons - the **Palermo Protocol**. The need to coordinate and strengthen international cooperation to face the challenges of transnational organized crime was emphasized, and an agreement was reached on a review mechanism to measure the implementation of the Convention and reinforce criminal justice responses. **Sr. Winifred DOHERTY RGS** made a statement in the name of 9 member organizations of the **NGO CSTIP** – including our **RSHM NGO**.



➔ [Watch the video](#)

Distribution: General Council Team; Provincials/ Regionals, JPIC Animators; Global Network of RSHM Schools; UN Interest Group - Portuguese translation by Maria Luisa Pinho, RSCM.

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